

CLOUDS FIRST REPORT

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This purpose of the cloud first assignment and concurrently this image was to give the students of the class an opportunity to try and capture fluid flow in the form of a cloud. This project offered a creative approach to understanding atmospheric happenings and types of weather system formations. Each student captured a different atmospheric condition and represented it in an image with a personal artistic touch. The particular phenomenon captured in the corresponding image is a cumulonimbus with a stratocumulus at sunset. The heightened viewpoint of the image and the contrast of the colors in the clouds derived from the lighting at sunset and the development of the clouds.

The specific clouds captured were a stratocumulus and a very large cumulonimbus. The image was taken on September 6th, a day where the CAPE was around 300. This value indicates that the atmosphere was quite unstable. This is the cause of the cumulo development of the clouds, and is particularly responsible for the large vertical development of the cumulonimbus. The vertical development is a direct result of air and water moving upwards as a result of the unstable nature of the environment. This leads to the large, tall cloud centered in the image.

The visualization techniques found in this image mostly derive from the natural lighting and perspective of the image. It is possible to see the vertical development of the cumulonimbus more clearly because the image was taken around 50 feet off of ground level. Using the light at dusk gives color, shadows, and thus depth to the sky that would otherwise not be present that lend a hand in representing the atmospheric interactions taking place. The contrast between the stratocumulus and cumulonimbus derived from the variation in light they were each receiving, helps differentiate the two and their development.

The setup for the capture of this image was relatively straightforward. It was taken at the top of the spanish towers (5 stories high) to give the image a depth and perspective it would not have if taken from ground level. The camera was a SONY sony dsc-wx350 with an iso of 80. The image was taken from the west and was pointed at the sky above north east boulder. The image contains a stratocumulus in the foreground and the large cumulus further back. The post processing of this image was relatively uninvolved due to the quality of the initial image. To enhance the difference in color between the stratocumulus and the cumulonimbus the sharpness and contrast were turned up. Additionally the shadows were turned down to maintain a full depiction of the development of the cloud.

The image turned out rather well, it is aesthetically pleasing and gives an unobstructed depiction of atmospheric phenomenon. It has been suggested that post processing the image is further cropped to remove some of the stratocumulus in the name of highlighting only the cumulonimbus. This is something that would give a different meaning to the image and could change the perspective of the capture. It is something to consider, especially if the cumulonimbus is the desired sole subject of the photo. The lighting and perspective lend themselves well to a successful image and as such should be considered as a viable option for anyone attempting to create a similar capture.